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## Notes

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### THE GESTURE OF PROSKYNESIS

A favorite device of the Babylonian seal is the representation of a group of three figures, one a divinity, one a person who is being introduced to that divinity, and also the one who introduces him. The second of these has his hand slightly in front of his face in the act of waving a kiss towards the god.

In an article *Gesture in Sumerian and Babylonian Prayer* published in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, October 1919, Professor S. Langdon says: "This waving a kiss seems to have been the only gesture of worship in earliest Babylonian times. Kneeling and prostration were then regarded as unworthy of a freeman. Later bowing and prostration were added to the old gesture of salutation with the kissing hand."

The first references in Greek to *proskynesis* are all connected with the customs of the East and are to be found in the *Persians* of Aeschylus or in Herodotus.

Herodotus I, 134 has the first important reference to this mode of adoration, which is thus translated by Rawlinson: "When the Persians meet each other on the streets, you may know if the persons meeting are of equal rank by the following token: if they are, instead of speaking, they kiss each other on the lips. In the case where one is a little inferior to the other, the kiss is given on the cheek; while where the difference is great, the inferior prostrates himself on the ground." It is to be observed that in this translation "kissing" is given as the form of salutation except in that of the lowest rank, where it is simply "prostration." The words which he translates "prostrates himself on the ground" are *προσπίπτων προσκυνέει*. The verb *προσκυνέω* is clearly derived from *κυνέω* "I kiss" and *πρός* "towards." We evidently have in this passage in Herodotus the description of the very custom named by Professor Langdon, that is, prostration added to the old gesture of waving a kiss. Those of equal rank kiss the lips, one slightly inferior kisses the cheek, one greatly inferior does not dare to kiss the body of the superior but waves a kiss as he prostrates himself.

The idea of *proskynesis* as involving merely the waving of a kiss still survives in Lucian, since in describing the adoration of Helios he uses the words "kissing the hand," *τὴν χεῖρα κίσαντες*, *De Saltatione* 17. In his *Encomium Demosthenis* 49 an assumed spectator of that orator's death tells how Demosthenes moved his hand to his mouth as if in the act of *proskynesis* and thus drank the poison.

The word used in this last passage could not mean prostration, but must denote some such gesture as that pictured by the seals of Babylon.

Sittl in his *Gebärden der Griechen und Römer* connects this word with *κύνω* and translates it *anhündeln*, "to fawn like a dog," but there can be little doubt that he is wrong and that the derivation is from *κυνέω*, "I kiss."

The meaning given by most translators, the scholia, and lexicons is "prostration" but this is only a derived or attendant meaning, since often no such gesture is involved. The custom as well as the word itself shows that the original gesture involved in *proskynesis* was simply the waving of a kiss.

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### SCHLIEMANN AND INDIANAPOLIS

There is a wide-spread tradition that Henry Schliemann, the great excavator, made his fortune as a grocer in Indianapolis, that he sold all his interests in that city and then excavated Troy. It is spoken of as an act of ingratitude that he should have forgotten the associates among whom his fortune was created and should have given his discovered treasures to Athens and Berlin.

The most careful study of his various autobiographies and biographies does not reveal a single reference to the state of Indiana or to its capital.

An article by Elbert Hubbard in *The Philistine* for August 1902 is the source of the tradition of the grocery business in Indianapolis. This article, slightly condensed, is as follows: "Once upon a day there was a grocer who lived in Indianapolis, and this grocer's name was Henry Schliemann. He made money rapidly, for in addition to a grocery he had a feed barn and had men on the road selling for him in the adjoining states. Schliemann grew rich, opened up a city division which greatly added to his fortune. He had other ambitions than added fortunes or success in politics, withdrew from business in the year 1868, turned all his property into cash; and in April 1870 began to excavate Troy. His Trojan treasures were presented to Berlin. Had Schliemann given his priceless finds to Indianapolis, it would have made that city a Sacred Mecca."

From Schliemann's own writings we learn that he was born in Germany in 1822 and that at the age of fourteen he began working in a wretched grocery where he labored in misery and poverty for nearly six years, until his health forced him to seek other employment, and that penniless and ill he walked to Hamburg. He then tried to go to South America, was shipwrecked, came to Amsterdam, where he worked for four years, then he went to St. Petersburg. He remained in business in Russia, with slight interruptions, until 1863, and this business was the handling of indigo, cotton, tea, and two or three other staple articles. In 1863 he had won such wealth that he decided to retire and to take up the dream of his childhood, the recovery of the city of Troy.

In 1850 he had come to California in search of a brother and, by chance, was in that state on July 4, 1850, when California was admitted as a state into the Union. A proclamation had been made that all foreigners then in California could become citizens by declaring themselves before the proper authorities. Schliemann availed himself of that offer and became an Ameri-